

FIVE AREAS OF INTEREST

VOLUNTEERISM | VISITOR EXPERIENCE | EDUCATION | OUTREACH

One component of the data analysis process involved comparing the program models for similarities and trends and the subsequent development of an overall composite model of the identified components. The gaps in the composite model (areas in need of improvement across the four models) were then considered in light of the desire to more fully engage the identified priority audiences (currently under-engaged/underserved audiences across the four models). Five key areas of interest emerged from this examination as being critical to expanding programs in the four areas to new audiences. These five areas are as follows:

❖ **Create a Welcoming Environment**

The first step in ‘capturing’ an audience is making sure that they feel welcome. The creation of a welcoming environment stems from **organizational policy** and involves all aspects of the park including the **staff, facilities, services, and atmosphere**.

❖ **Conduct and Provide Access to Research**

Access to information about a variety of program-relevant **topics** is valuable for developing and implementing any type of successful program. Becoming a **learning organization**, however, also includes active involvement in conducting research and the **dissemination** of research-related information.

❖ **Integrate Evaluation**

In order to continually improve, evaluation must be integrated into all aspects of program development and delivery. There are many **designs** and **methods** that may be used to conduct evaluation throughout the life of a program including **needs assessment**, **implementation evaluation**, and **impact evaluation**. Both the process of evaluation and the **use of findings** from evaluation are vital in program improvement and evolution.

❖ **Create Likely and Unlikely Partnerships**

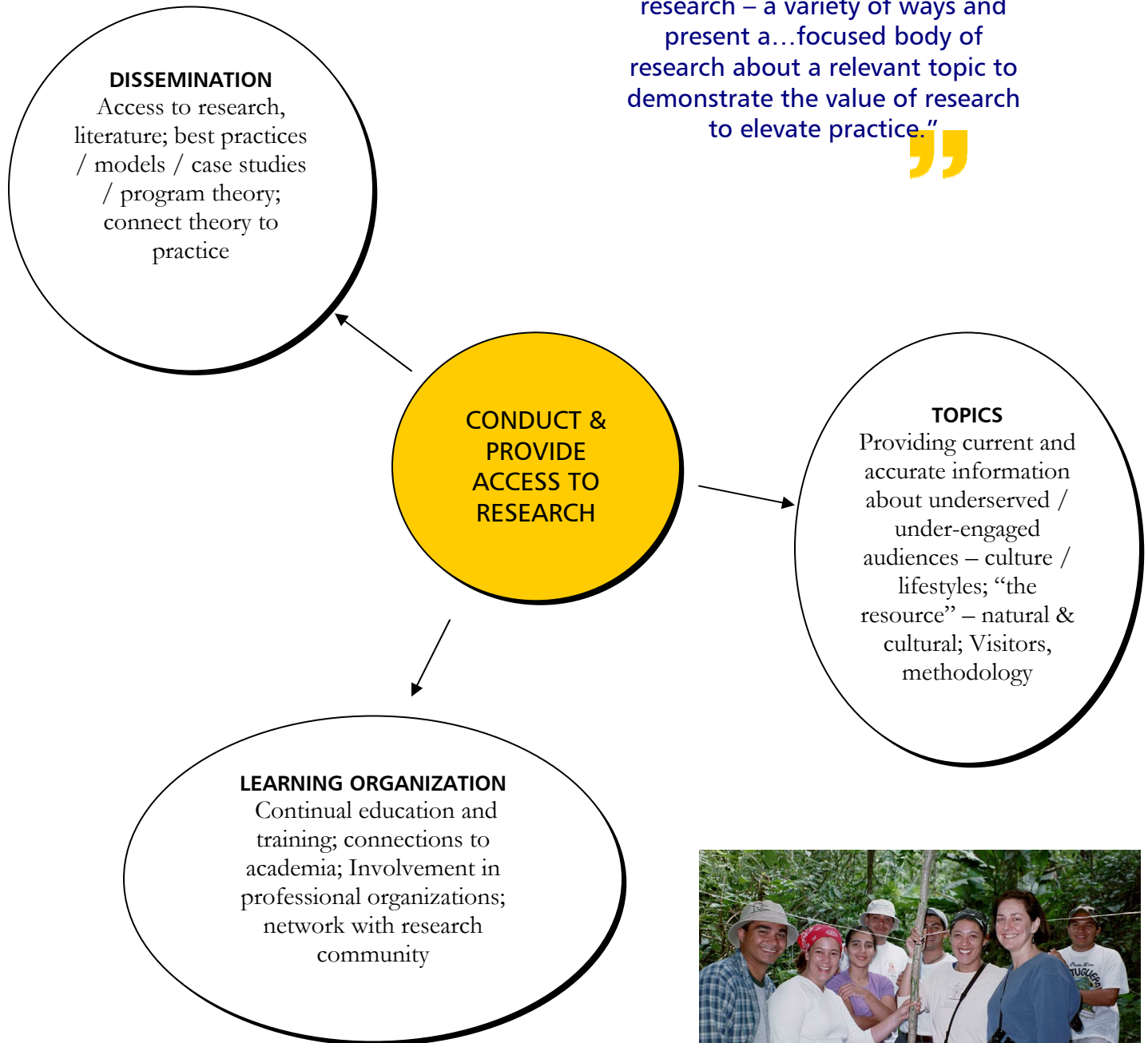
Partnerships are always important when it comes to expanding the resources available for programming. Strategic alliances, networks, and collaborative relationships are valuable for many other reasons as well. In order to develop an **understanding of community culture** and become a **true part of the community**, parks must **expand relationships** to include all **stakeholders** and together develop a **mutual understanding** of each other.

❖ **Enrich and Expand the Stories**

To attract new and different participants, programming must be **relevant** to the audiences of interest. This can be accomplished by utilizing **multiple approaches** to **tell the complete story**, allowing the audience to make their own **connections** with the park.

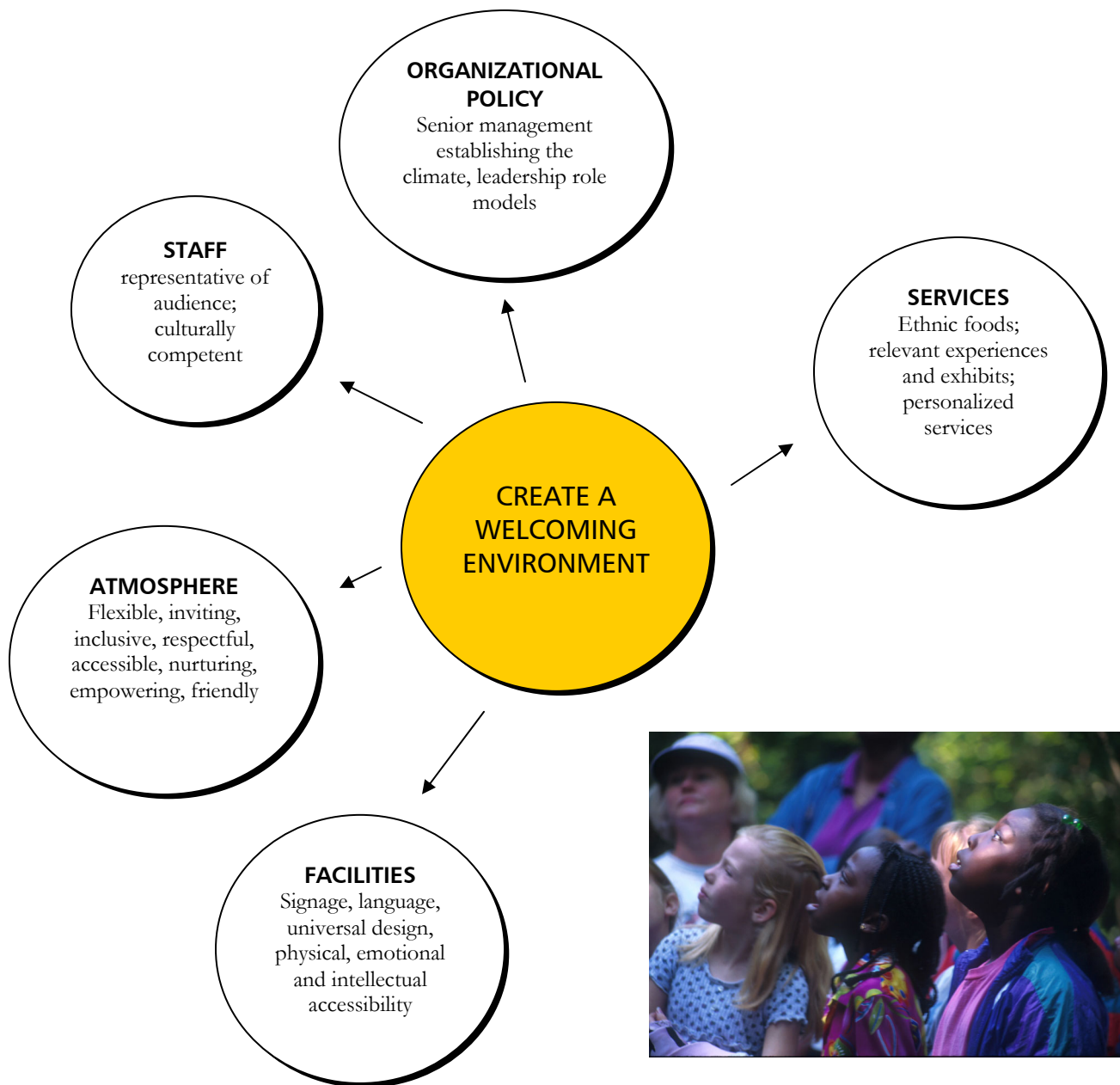
CONDUCT & PROVIDE ACCESS TO RESEARCH

“To teach...leaders ‘how to fish’
i.e. how to keep up with the
research – a variety of ways and
present a...focused body of
research about a relevant topic to
demonstrate the value of research
to elevate practice.”



CREATE A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

“Often, a non-traditional visitor comes away feeling still an outsider; that the program belonged to and is about someone else. They are not engaged, linked to the park’s story, and as a result, come away relatively unaffected.”



ENRICH & EXPAND THE STORIES



CREATE LIKELY & UNLIKELY PARTNERSHIPS

“[We need to] aggressively engage communities focusing on both what the NPS can provide residents and how residents and the community can enhance, enlighten, and expand park experiences.”



“Getting more dialogue between communities and organizations...to cross-fertilize, share ideas, (authentic practices), etc. Looking outside your immediate areas of expertise will help gain perspective, diversity, and ultimately contribute to more successful programs – provides an integrated, viable, diverse foundation.”



INTEGRATE EVALUATION

“The key to getting where you want to go is **knowing** where you are. To effectively build depth, breadth and value, we must first identify our existing strengths and assets.”

